

Appl. No. 09/706,294
Amdt. dated January 19, 2003
Reply to Final Office Action of November 21, 2003

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (previously amended): A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects the waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, the absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis, that includes a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges;

b) a pair of opposed side panels that extend outward from the back waist region, wherein each of the opposed side panels defines a first side margin, the first side margins are permanently attached to the side edges of the absorbent chassis in the back waist region to provide a permanent joint, and a second side margin, the second side margins are releasably attached to the side edges of the absorbent chassis in the front waist region to provide a releasable joint; and

c) a fastener permanently attached to the second side margin of each of the side panels, wherein the releasable joint is provided by the fastener and one or more releasable bonds, wherein the one or more releasable bonds are adhesive, thermal, cohesive, ultrasonic, or any other bond which becomes destroyed upon first disengagement.

Claim 2 (previously amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein the absorbent chassis comprises:

a) an outer cover;

b) a bodyside liner which is connected to the outer cover in a superposed relation; and

c) an absorbent core disposed between the outer cover and the bodyside liner.

Claim 3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (previously amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein the fasteners are hook and loop type fasteners.

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Claim 5 (previously amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 and further comprising at least one attachment panel which is located on an exterior surface of the absorbent chassis wherein the fasteners are refastenably engaged to the attachment panel.

Claim 6 (previously amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein the absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides an exterior surface of the absorbent chassis and wherein the fasteners are refastenably engaged directly to the outer cover of the absorbent chassis.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein the side panels are stretchable ~~extensible~~ at least in the lateral direction.

Claims 8-9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (previously amended): The absorbent article of claim 1 and further defining an article centerline in the longitudinal direction wherein each of the fasteners includes a fastener ear that is attached to the second side margin of the side panel and extends inwardly toward the article centerline when in a prefastened configuration.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 10 wherein the fastener ears are stretchable ~~extensible~~ at least in the lateral direction.

Claim 12 – 13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (previously amended): A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects the waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, the absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis that includes a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges;

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b) a pair of opposed back panels which are permanently attached to the side edges of the absorbent chassis in the back waist region of the absorbent article;

c) a pair of opposed front panels which are releasably attached to the side edges of the absorbent chassis in the front waist region of the absorbent article to provide a pair of releasable joints wherein the front panel and the back panel on each side edge of the absorbent chassis are connected together along a side seam; and

d) a fastener permanently attached to each of the front panels configured to engage an exterior surface of the absorbent chassis in the front waist region, wherein each releasable joint is provided by the fastener and one or more releasable bonds, wherein the one or more releasable bonds are adhesive, thermal, cohesive, ultrasonic, or any other bond which becomes destroyed upon first disengagement.

Claim 15 (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 14 wherein the absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides the exterior surface of the absorbent chassis and wherein the fasteners are configured to refastenably engage directly with the outer cover of the absorbent chassis.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 14 wherein the pair of opposed back panels and the pair of opposed front panels ~~side panels are~~ stretchable extensible in at least the lateral direction.

Claims 17-18 (canceled)

Claim 19 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 14 and further defining an article centerline in the longitudinal direction wherein each of the fasteners includes a fastener ear that is attached to the ~~second side margin of the front side panel~~ front side panel and extends inwardly toward the article centerline.

Claim 20 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 19 wherein each of the fastener ears are stretchable extensible in at least the lateral direction.

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Claim 21 – 22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (previously amended): A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects the waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, the absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis that includes a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges; and

b) a pair of opposed back panels which are permanently attached to the side edges of the absorbent chassis in the back waist region;

c) a pair of opposed front panels which are permanently attached to the side edges of the absorbent chassis in the front waist region wherein the front panel and the back panel are releasably connected together along a side seam to provide a releasable joint; and

d) a fastener permanently attached to each of the back panels adjacent the side seams and configured to refastenably engage one of the front panels and upon disengagement of the releasable joints, the fasteners are also configured to engage an exterior surface of the absorbent chassis in the front waist region, wherein the releasable joint is provided by the fastener and one or more releasable bonds, wherein the one or more releasable bonds are adhesive, thermal, cohesive, ultrasonic, or any other bond which becomes destroyed upon first disengagement.

Claim 24 (previously amended): The absorbent article of claim 23 wherein the absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides the exterior surface of the absorbent chassis and wherein the fasteners are configured to refastenably engage directly with the outer cover of the absorbent chassis.

Claim 25 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 23 wherein the pair of opposed back panels and the pair of opposed front panels ~~side panels are~~ stretchable ~~extensible~~ in at least the lateral direction.

Claims 26-27 (canceled)

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Claim 28 (previously amended): The absorbent article of claim 23 and further defining an article centerline in the longitudinal direction wherein each of the fasteners includes a fastener ear that is attached to the second side margin of the front side-panel and extends inwardly toward the article centerline.

Claim 29 (currently amended): The absorbent article of claim 28 wherein the fastener ear is stretchable ~~extensible~~ in at least the lateral direction.

Claim 30 - 31 (canceled)